

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The applicants' attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and remarks.

Responsive to the objection set forth in paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the specification has been amended according to the Examiner's suggestion. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

The specification has also been amended to improve its form. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1 and 2 are in the application.

Claims 3-17 are new. Entry and consideration of claims 3-17 is requested.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Sekiguchi, U.S. Patent No. 4,821,117. Specifically, it was set forth that Sekiguchi discloses all of the features of claim 1 and claim 2, except that it does not teach an initial setting feature for selecting the white light as a source when the endoscope light is turned on. However, it was set forth that such a feature is obvious to a person of ordinary skill, because under normal use white light imagery is often selected first during insertion of the endoscope before reaching a target position where fluorescent imagery is employed.

Claims 1 and 2 have been amended. Consideration of claims 1 and 2 as amended is requested.

Claim 1 calls for, in combination with other limitations, "an imaging camera having at least one white light imaging means and at least one fluorescent light imaging means each for imaging the image captured by said endoscope", a setting means which sets a selected light source, and "an initial setting means which selects said at least one white light imaging means prior to the setting by said setting means whereby said at least one fluorescent light imaging means is prevented from receiving light when said light source is turned on."

As set forth in the specification, page 12, lines 5-8, damage to the fluorescent imaging device is avoided when the endoscope light is turned on if it is ensured that light is routed to the white light imaging portion of the endoscope. That is, white light imaging is selected when the endoscope light is turned on as claimed in claim 1.

Sekiguchi does not teach or suggest such a feature. It is, therefore, submitted that claim 1 is not obvious over Sekiguchi. Reconsideration is requested.

Claim 2 also calls for an initial setting feature ("initial setting device") which selects the white light imaging feature of the endoscope when the light is turned on to prevent damage to the fluorescent imaging device of the endoscope. It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that claim 2 is not obvious over Sekiguchi for the same reasons claim 1 is not obvious over that reference. Reconsideration is requested.

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 1, 2003:

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August 1, 2003

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Respectfully submitted,



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